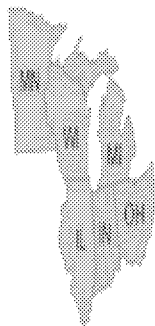


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Great Lakes

Region 5 Intelligence Briefing



November 15, 2021

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Great Lakes

New Bridge Part Of Stream Restoration.

The **Alpena (MI) News** (11/14) reports a new timber bridge has been built “where Schmellers Road crosses Hunt Creek southwest of Atlanta,” replacing “a set of three undersized steel pipe culverts that had been causing Hunt Creek to flow too fast through the crossing, contributing to erosion and creating a barrier for fish.” It is the fourth “road/stream crossing restoration” in the area, and the “approximately \$350,000” cost was funded by “the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service’s National Fish Passage Program, Great Lakes Fishery Trust and Walters Family Foundation.”

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Illinois

Rep. Rush Writes Reagan About Chicago Southland Water.

The **Chicago Tribune** (11/11, Buckley) reports Rep. Bobby Rush (D-IL) “sent a letter Wednesday night to EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan asking him to work with Illinois to rectify problems outlined in a Nov. 8 Chicago Tribune story that highlighted how crumbling infrastructure and political disagreements led to the Dixmoor crisis,” which “left thousands without reliable water.” In his letter, Rush referenced the recently passed infrastructure plan and said, “In order for the funds to be properly distributed, we must have a comprehensive understanding of the water supply and delivery system for the south suburbs of Chicago. ... The financial straits that many of these south suburban municipalities find themselves in due to structural disadvantages and the COVID-19 pandemic mean that they are simply not in a fiscal place to take on their water issues alone.”

The **Oak Forest (IL) Patch** (11/12, O’Gorman) also reports.

KS Agriculture Company To Pay Fine For Pesticide Use.

WCMY-AM Ottawa, IL (11/12, Harker) reports Nutrien Ag Solutions “has agreed to pay the EPA a fine of more than \$688,000 for applying dicamba products last summer in Kansas when their registrations were cancelled under the 9th circuit appeals court ruling.” EPA Acting Region 7 Administrator Edward H. Chu said, “It’s critical that pesticide applicators follow labeling requirements to prevent off-site movement of pesticides that can damage non-target crops. This enforcement action demonstrates the Agency’s commitment to ensuring the safe use and distribution of pesticide products.”

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Indiana

Indianapolis To Begin Industrial Site Cleanup.

The **Indianapolis Business Journal** (11/12, Bonilla Muñoz) reports, “After years of environmental studies and planning, remediation work is at last scheduled to begin next year” at Black Mountain, “a former industrial site on Indianapolis’ near-east side.” The city “took control of the site in late 2018, and in 2019, landed a \$600,000 grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to use on environmental assessments, remediation and development planning.”

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Michigan

Benton Harbor Residents Sue Michigan Governor, Officials Over Lead In Water.

The **Detroit Free Press** (11/12, Boucher) reported, “Benton Harbor residents are still suffering from the effects of lead-tainted water because of years of ‘deliberate indifference’ from Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, state department directors, city leaders and others, according to allegations in a new federal lawsuit that seeks class-action status.” The lawsuit, “filed Wednesday, stems from the ongoing Benton Harbor water crisis, where lead levels have exceeded state and federal drinking water standards since late 2018.” Lead water pipes “continue to corrode throughout the low-income southwest Michigan community, sending potentially dangerous particulates into the homes of its mainly Black residents.”

Also reporting were the **Detroit News** (11/12, Mauger) and **The Hill** (11/12, Budryk), and **WSJM-AM** Saint Joseph, MI (11/14), **WXMI-TV** Grand Rapids, MI (11/13, Witkos).

Benton Harbor Water Suit Seeks Class-Action Status. The **AP** (11/12) reports a lawsuit was “filed a week after the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency said it found a variety of violations at the Benton Harbor water plant as well as problems with how the city had communicated with residents about lead in the water.” According to the suit, “The number of injured individuals who have been injured by exposure to lead in the Benton Harbor water is in the thousands.” The suit “seeks class-action status.”

The **Chicago Tribune** (11/12, Wambsgans) features a photo essay on the Benton Harbor water crisis.

Bridge Magazine (MI) (11/12) provides a list of respondents in the suit.

Benton Harbor Water Problems Echo Those Of Flint.

The **Chicago Tribune** (11/12, Hawthorne) reports a top state official urged Benton Harbor, MI residents “last month to drink and cook with bottled water, three years after testing required under a then-new Michigan law revealed high levels of brain-damaging lead in tap water.” The alarming findings “are another example of hidden dangers in scores of U.S. cities that during the last century installed lead pipes known as service lines to deliver drinking water into homes.” For children “in poor communities, a researcher once told the Tribune, exposure to lead is ‘another kick in the gut’ amid myriad other social ills.”

Judge Approves Settlement In Flint Water Lawsuits.

AP (11/12, White) reports, “A judge on Wednesday approved a \$626 million deal to settle lawsuits filed by Flint residents who found their tap water contaminated by lead.” Of that amount, “\$600 million...is coming from the state of Michigan, which was accused of repeatedly overlooking the risks of using the Flint River without properly treating the water.” The money will go “to Flint children who were exposed to the water, adults who can show an injury, certain business owners and anyone who paid water bills,” with “about 80% of what’s left after legal fees...earmarked for children.”

East Village Magazine (MI) (11/12, Travis) and **Davison (MI) Index** (11/11, Gould) also report.

Flint Residents Protest Plans To Build Asphalt Plant.

WJRT-TV Flint, MI (11/12) reports a group of Flint residents held “an online vigil Friday evening to ‘mourn the death of clean air’” as “a protest against the proposed Ajax Materials Corp. plant in Genesee Township.” The EPA “recommended more studies before the state makes a final decision on the Ajax plans” for the asphalt plant and “recommends that state environmental regulators consider concerns about the plant outside of the scope of an air quality permit, including possible civil rights issues.”

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Wisconsin

Applications Being Accepted For Diesel Emissions Reduction Projects.

The **Wisconsin Politics** (11/11) reports the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources “is accepting applications for projects that reduce diesel emissions and improve Wisconsin’s air quality and human health now through Jan. 7, 2022.” There is “approximately \$320,000 is available to fund Wisconsin-based projects designed to reduce emissions from eligible public and private vehicle fleets.” Funding “is supported through” the EPA.

The Wisconsin Examiner (11/12), Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin (11/12), and WITI-TV Milwaukee (11/13) also report.

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